

INTERPRETING THE MEOCS REPORT

“The MEOCS report provides all the information we believe is needed to obtain a quick, thorough, and accurate view of what the survey says.”

As you examine the results of your MEOCS, you may wonder what it all means. Certainly, there is a lot of information in the report. We believe it can be quite useful at all levels of the organization. But how do you go about interpreting the information?

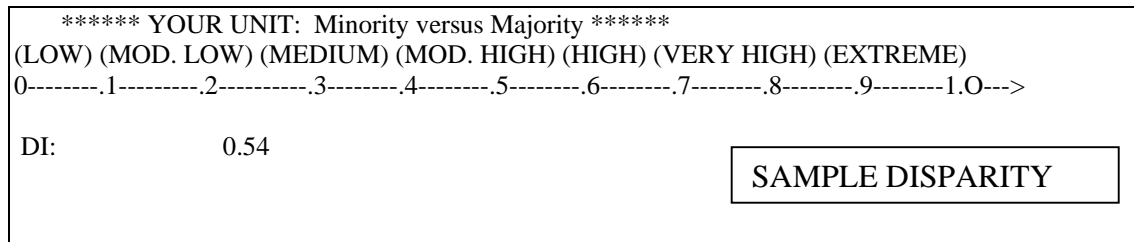
- **Read the MEOCS introduction/EO Disparity Map**
- **Look at the demographic breakout**
- **Review the overall unit summary**
- **Examine the disparity indexes**
- **Use subgroup factor comparisons to understand the disparities**
- **Set action team goals based on the results**

To get the most benefit from the MEOCS report, you might try the following procedure:

1. **READ THE MEOCS INTRODUCTION** and the information on the EO Disparity Map to get a quick overview of the contents and how to interpret the results.
2. **LOOK AT THE DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKOUT** of who responded to the survey within your unit. Remember, a computer program, based on the information contained on the scan sheets your people completed, constructs the charts. If someone failed to provide the information, or if for some other reason (e.g., stray pencil marks, etc.) the computer couldn't interpret the response, it will be listed as a missing case. Sometimes people code incorrect information, either by design or accidentally. In our experience, the percentage of miscoding is not sufficient to invalidate the subgroup comparisons we conduct. The report is broken out by the same categories for which we later provide comparisons within your unit: minority/majority, men/women, officers/enlisted, junior enlisted (through E-5)/senior enlisted,

junior officers (through O-3)/senior officers, and military members/Federal civilians. If you do not receive information on each comparison it may be because a category had too few respondents.

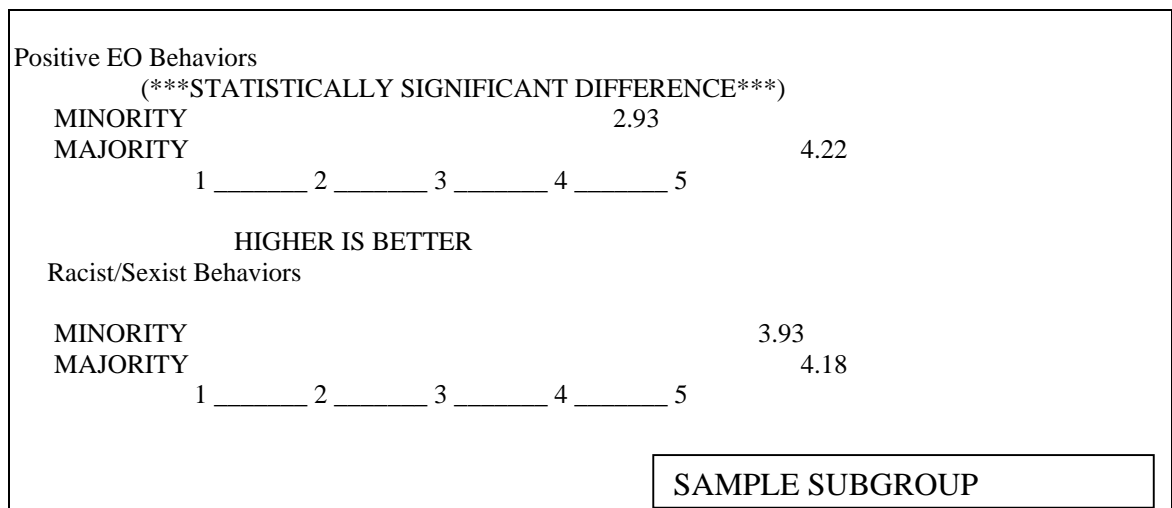
3. **REVIEW THE OVERALL UNIT SUMMARY** results; this shows you your unit's scores on the survey scales compared to the DEOMI database for your



Service and for all Services. It also gives a verbal description, based on the actual survey response scales, of what your unit's overall scores mean. (For an in-depth description of the 12-factor scales, go to Survey – “What is MEOCS?” on our website.) In the overall unit summary, you'll find a series of bar graphs reflecting the same overall data comparisons. (Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words.) Of course, the overall scores are heavily influenced by the type of people that represent your unit. For example, if you have mostly white males, the overall score may be very high, and yet you may still have significant equal opportunity problems. For that reason, we compare various important subgroups in your unit, to see how minority members feel as contrasted to majority members, how women answer as compared to men, etc. If you have big differences in viewpoint between subgroups, you may want to find out why.

4. **EXAMINE THE DISPARITY INDEXES** for an overall summary of the differences in viewpoint between the compared subgroups. Take a look at the results. **The greater the disparity score** (i.e., the longer the bar and the higher the number), **the more divergent the viewpoints**; the more divergent the viewpoints, the greater the chances for conflict between the groups and the lower the morale for at least one of the compared groups. Any action plan you develop should probably focus on the subgroup differences first, and in order of the magnitude of the disparities. For example, if the disparity index between minority and majority is .54 (see the sample chart below), the chart indicates a "moderately high" level of disparity. If this is your largest disparity, focus first on minority-majority issues.

5. **USE SUBGROUP FACTOR COMPARISONS TO UNDERSTAND THE DISPARITIES** and to determine what specific factors contribute to the overall disparity in viewpoint of the subgroups. In the previous example, we found a disparity index of .54 for minority and majority members. The chart indicated that this disparity is "moderately high." In the subgroup comparisons (see the sample chart below) for the majority/minority members, we found a statistically significant difference between the two groups on several of the MEOCS factor scales. One of the biggest differences was on "Positive EO Behaviors." The majority score (4.22) was much higher than the minority score (2.93). Since a **higher score on a MEOCS factor scale always means a perception of a better condition** (this is not true for individual items on the survey), we see that the minority members perceive significantly more problems than the majority group members. Thus, there is a perception (at least) that the command structure does not do as well as it might in encouraging positive interaction between the races. This perception needs to be examined, validated (or not), and dealt with. Note that in the sample unit, the minority/majority difference on "Racist/Sexist Behaviors" was **not** labeled as "statistically significant." This means that the difference may have been the result of sampling fluctuations and should not be considered significant unless you validate it through other findings



(interviews, etc.).

6. **SET ACTION TEAM GOALS BASED ON THE RESULTS** identified in the disparity indexes and subgroup comparisons. We provide aids for establishing an action plan with a series of recommended resources and actions at our website. Once at the DEOMI website, just click on Survey and navigate your way through the available resources and recommendations. However, your action teams should not be limited by these recommendations. Certainly your equal opportunity staff should be involved. You may even want to request a Mobile Training Team (MTT) from DEOMI (you must

provide funding for the team's travel expenses) to help provide training for your senior leaders. The important thing is not the technique you use, but rather that you take positive action to demonstrate your commitment to solving problems and creating a better human relations climate within the unit.